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ABSTRACT

The profession of adult education provides many excellent opportunities to enhance global understanding. One way for adult educators to become involved in international activities is through the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). As a federation of adult education organizations that are organized in seven regions throughout the world, the ICAE maintains a series of international networks that are currently focusing on four high priority issues: the education of women, the environment, literacy, and peace and human rights. Adult educators can participate in ICAE activities through its institutional members, including the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) and Coalition of Adult Education Organizations. Among the many ways in which adult educators can become involved in international activities are the following: reading information on international programs available in publications of the ICAE, United Nations, and adult educational organizations in foreign countries; corresponding with foreign pen pals; joining volunteer organizations that sponsor international activities; receiving/housing foreign guests; applying to a foreign exchange program; joining the Peace Corps; and consulting. (This conference presentation also includes detailed information about the history of the author's involvement in the ICAE and her own international activities.) (MN)

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ADULT EDUCATORS WITH A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

By

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for
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After the most inspiring words of Dr. Sudarkasa in yesterday's general session, I am sure we are all more motivated to use the excellent opportunities which the profession of adult education provides to enhance global understanding among the peoples of this little world. And I am also quite sure that you all recognized yourselves as internationalists in one way or another, at least in my definition. When students ask me, "But Dr. Cassara, what does it mean to be an international adult educator?" I have a very simple answer. It means to be informed about the education of adults in other parts of the world as well as our own, to care enough to put that knowledge to good use, and to understand above all that we do things <u>with</u> other people and not <u>for</u> them. Believe me, it is one of the most rewarding tasks we could ever face, and it is amazing to me that everyone has not jumped on the bandwagon.

In the middle 70's, I carried out a study of the nearly one hundred graduate programs in adult education in the United States and Canada to determine the amount of international activity in their programs. At that time there were only about a half dozen programs that had a course dedicated to an international subject.

Ten years later, I repeated that study with the help of Dr. James Draper of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. We were certainly pleased to learn that international activities had increased immensely, but still there were fifteen programs which did absolutely nothing--no exchange professorships, no exchange students, so international research, no courses, not even any private international consulting on the part of the

professors. Let me give you one more example. Only three departments in the U.S. reported student exchange programs, although fourteen reported sponsoring student tours abroad. At that time, student exchanges were almost non-existent in Canada. However, now as we approach the middle of the 90's, I am sure there would be a wholly different and improved picture. I urge one of you here today to make that new study and in doing so become a recognized internationalist.

Most recently, with the help of faculty members at the University of Southern Maine, I have conducted a survey of the graduate adult education programs in the United States and Canada to ascertain what they are doing related to multiculturalism. To summarize very quickly, I could say that out of the one-hundred responses, 76 were very keen on taking significant action, and about half of those were already doing so.

In this presentation today, I have three objectives which I hope you will find helpful. In the first place, I will discuss the history and the work of the International Council for Adult Education, of which I am currently a member of the Executive Board. Secondly, I will discuss briefly the international activities that I have carried out, so that you will see first-hand how easy it is to become involved. And lastly, I will enumerate and explain many ways that adult educators can become involved in international work, sometimes without leaving the desk.

The International Council for Adult Education, headquartered in Toronto, was really the brain-child of a great, humble and

good man, a Canadian named Roby Kidd. Some of you have undoubtedly had the pleasure to know him. In the late 60's, Roby, a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, found himself becoming a one-man clearinghouse for all those adult domestic educators going abroad and all visitors coming to the US and Canada or almost anywhere else for that matter. So when he attended the UNESCO Conference on Adult Education in Tokyo in July 1972, he gathered a group of leaders from many countries to discuss the formation of an international non-governmental adult education body, and by February 1973 the Council was registered in Canada.

Roby Kidd was its first Secretary-General, a position he held until 1979 when he moved over to take on the role of Treasurer, and a young man whom he had hand-picked and trained superbly, Dr. Budd Hall, became the new Secretary-General. Budd served until 1991 when he resigned to take a professorship in adult education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, after fifteen years of devoted service in which he gave all his human energy to the development of the Council. Budd's students are very lucky to be studying with the world's foremost authority on adult education internationally. Today, a woman with duel citizenship in Chile and Canada, Ana Maria Quiroz, has picked up the challenge and is a most wise and competent leader in the position of Secretary-General.

If you are interested in the details of this history, you will find them next year in a book I am editing, <u>Adult Education: World Collaboration</u> in the chapter written by Dr. Hall. I will not try to review the history of the work of the

Council, but only to give you some insight as to the current situation.

The ICAE is not a bureaucratic hierarchy. It is a federation of adult education organizations. The world is divided into seven regions--Africa, Arab Region, Asia and the South Pacific, Caribbean, Europe. Latin America and the North American Region which includes the US and Canada. Each region elects a Vice President. Additionally, there are now over 100 national organizations affiliated, since national adult education associations in any country may become members of the ICAE directly, as well as working within their own regional grouping. The national organizations in each region, working together, elect one member of the Executive Board. At this point in time, Dr. Jacques Proulx of Canada is the Regional Vice President from the North American Region, and I was elected to the board by the national associations in Canada and the US. Our four-year terms come to an end next year and in the new elections, the Vice Presidency for the region will alternate to the US and the other member will be from Canada.

The regions coordinate, motivate, and support to the best of their ability the adult education work in their area through conferences, newsletters, personal communication, etc. In each case they try to give particular emphasis to the four current priority issues of the ICAE which are chosen at the international conferences every four years. The conferences have been held in Tanzania, Paris, Buenos Aires, Thailand, and next year the fifth conference will be held in Egypt.

The four current priority issues are (1) the education of women, (2) the environment, (3) literacy, and (4) peace and human rights. The work for these priorities is carried on by international networks, whereby all those persons interested in an issue join the ranks of a network. None of the networks work in exactly the same way. Much depends on the level of initiative of the leaders, the sources of funding, the number of countries involved and the level of their involvement. However, networks do research, they make information available, they hold conferences, and communicate with the members in whatever ways are possible in order to initiate action.

I should definitely mention in passing that the ICAE is an accredited member of a number of Non-Governmental Organization (NGO's) bodies at the United Nations and often plays a leadership role in various activities. The magazine of the ICAE, Convergence, is an excellent source for information about adult education around the world.

Since membership in the organization is by institution, individuals sometimes wonder how they can interact. Here in the United States, the AAACE is a member of the ICAE, as is the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations, of which your body, ACHE, is a member. There are two other US member institutions, the Association for Community Based Education and Laubach Literacy Action. More direct interaction can come through membership in the International Associates for Adult Education which is tied to the CAEO, or through getting information and becoming a member of a network. Incidentally there are other networks in addition to those of the current priorities--for

instance, participatory research, history of adult education and others. I have brought along some brochures on the Associates and on the ICAE which are available here today.

Now the Second item on my agenda. How did I get involved? There are so many facets to my interests now, that I could never enumerate them all. But let me just cite a few. In the first place, when I became an Associate Professor of Adult Education at the University of the District of Columbia, I thought that the Fulbright organization should be sponsoring adult educators and I applied, scarcely hoping that I would be successful. I was, and I went to Berlin to do research on the career pathways of professional women in the then four institutions of higher education. I had six short months of lead time to bone up on my German. Fortunately, most academic Germans also speak some English, so my interviews were carried on in a mixture of the two languages. I sent my report back to Germany in German because I noticed that some German academics had a pile of material in English on their desks which they didn't always get around to read. It paid off, and I was invited to be a guest professor at the University of Siegen for a semester.

This experience was such a turning point in my career, that I immediately became aware that back home at UDC, we were doing nothing to prepare our adult education students for international understanding or work, and I made it my business to do something about that.

Not being able to find funds to help students go abroad, I organized a graduate student tour to Kenya's Adult Education

College. Five students were able to pay their own way, as I did, and we raised funds to help another faculty member go. We had a magnificent three-week seminar studying adult education in Africa, for which I got Coca Cola of Africa to pay the stipends for the faculty members of the University of Nairobi. This group of students came back to D.C. and hosted an East African Fair at the University.

One of the next steps was a faculty exchange program which we were fortunate enough to have funded by the USIA. Over a three-year period seven faculty members from Nairobi's Adult Education College, and seven members from our Adult Education Department had exchanged for periods of one to three months each. To do all this on $50,000 was a miracle made possible by the cooperation of many individuals on both sides, such as the provision of free room and board. I could spend many hours describing the beautiful experiences that resulted, and from each one more actions were spun off. You'll have to take my word for that since you would not want to sit still to hear them here. Allow me to mention just one. One of the men from Nairobi wanted very badly to come back to America to do a doctorate. Another woman and myself became a committee of two to make that happen. Five years later we sent a new Ph.D. back to Nairobi to a department of thirty-five persons where there were until then only three persons with the doctorate.

At the end of the three-year exchange program, when I went back to Kenya to work on the evaluation, I took my husband, a professor of American history, along as a volunteer to give lectures. The Kenyans were very much interested in American

independence and human rights. They flocked to his lectures in each of the provincial cities, and the discussion periods were endless.

While there, I met with a group of women students who had graduated from the Diploma Program in Adult Education. I wanted to learn what this experience had meant to them personally and professionally. Their tales were so moving, I asked if they would try to write them for publication. In the end about four of them did and I got them published in the Howard University Journal of Negro Education, of which I a guest editor for the summer yearbook in 1987.

Back at UDC, I now had a support group of faculty and students interested in international adult education. During the next decade they assisted me, along with community members who now had developed the interest, in hosting three national conferences on aspects of international adult education.

You know there are many international visitors at the AAACE conferences, and many of them need some help in figuring out what is going on in our AAACE three-ring circuses. When I was Chair of the international Associates in Adult Education (CAEO), we decided that it would be a good idea to have a pre-conference on international adult education to which all the visitors from abroad would be invited as well as any of our own members. We did that for two or three years, and it was a most rewarding experience to exchange information and ideas and develop friendships with persons from many countries. Skipping over many details, I should just say that many of the participants, like

myself, made strong friendships that resulted in professional invitations to other countries.

I was particularly annoyed that the large German delegation was almost always made up of men. I determined to do something about that, and managed later to bring an advanced woman doctoral student to lecture at UDC and then at the national conference in Louisville. This opportunity gave her a little jump in status among her male colleagues which she rightly deserved. She is one of the most eminently qualified adult education professors I know. Today she is a professor at the former East German University in Jena.

In so far as possible I made it my business to become very familiar with the ICAE. We invited ICAE speakers to each of our national conferences, and participated in various aspects of their work. I believed then and I still do that we need a very active and professional international body to undergird our struggling adult education movement. Therefore, I was very happy to be elected to the Executive Committee of the ICAE which for me was the crowning jewel in my professional career.

When I retired from UDC and was moving to Maine, I sent along my resume to the University of Southern Maine, just in case they had any need for my services, and the telephone rang immediately. They were having a conference on international adult education and they needed a keynote speaker. That was the beginning of a happy relationship with them, as I have done their international adult education course for them each year.

In 1986, I was invited to be a co-coordinator of a conference in Frankfort, Germany on the subject of

multiculturalism in adult education. This opened my eyes to the fact that multiculturalism and internationalism are two sides of the same coin. When I returned, I went to work on the book, Adult Education in a Multicultural Society, which was published by Routledge in 1990. Now, as I mentioned earlier I am getting out the book on international collaboration in adult education which will be a textbook, but also an informative book for NGO's and governmental policy makers. It deals with the ICAE, NGO's, the World Bank, UNESCO, and the bilateral work of six countries.

Now, let me just tell you about one other project which is most exciting. The Peace Corps in the late 80's decided to go for persons with more advanced education, and devised a plan whereby Master's students could be accepted to the Peace Corps before finishing their programs and complete their work by directed research, independent study or internships in the host country. I got UDC to go through all the legal processes, and several students are either still away or have finished their programs. Also students from the University of Southern Maine are working in other countries as a result of their international study.

I have been very privileged to participate in this international work and help make it possible for others to have very rich and rewarding international experiences. So you see, you can do some of the same kinds of things, and you will love every minute of your international and multicultural experience.

Now, the third item on my agenda--how to get involved. Let

me count the ways. In the first place, let me say right away that I know well that many of you are involved in international activities, so there may be nothing new in the information I am about to provide. What might be new is the idea of a systematic approach so that we make things happen and not just wait for the serendipitous moment.

In any case, the following listing of activities may be helpful to you as you try to advise others.

In the very first place, one should check her or his own interests. What countries or regions of the world intrigue you? You have a wide choice. There are 184 countries in the United Nations. It is important to follow your interests. Your motivation is more sure, and your work becomes a joyful endeavor.

To do this one needs much information which, of course, can be acquired in endless ways--not only about adult education activities, but about the social, economic, and political conditions in those countries out of which adult education needs arise. Let me mention three adult education publications which may be helpful, but there are dozens more. Two are sent free of charge. Since you will be receiving a copy of my presentation in the Proceedings of this meeting, I will include the addresses for your benefit. One is the German Adult Education publication, Adult Education and Development, (address: Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, Fachstelle Für Internationalzusammenarbeit, Rheinallee 1, D-5300 Bonn 2, Federal Republic of Germany). It is very informative and interesting. Teachers might even like to use it in the classroom.

A second free publication is UNESCO Adult Education:

Information Notes. (address: Literacy and Adult Education Section, Basic Education Division, UNESCO, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris SP 07, France). It contains brief articles about people, meetings, books, newsletters that are available from many countries, and more.

The third publication I will mention is ICAE's Convergence.--well worth the subscription fee. It has longer articles and deals with theoretical ideas as well as descriptive material. I couldn't live without it. As I said there are many more, but if you followed through on these you would know where you wanted to turn next. (address: International Council for Adult Education, 720 Bathurst St. Suite 500, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 2R4).

Language is a critical if not crucial consideration. When it is at all possible, we should attempt to learn the language of the area of interest. It is very frustrating not to be able to communicate directly. I believe we are doing our graduate adult education students a disservice by not requiring facility in a language other than English. I have to tell you a tale on myself. A colleague from South America, asked me my opinion of materials he had been sending to North American adult educators. I had to admit I had not read them. I said that the trouble is that everything from South America comes in Spanish. He replied that it might have occurred to me that everything from North America comes in English. Late in the game, I've been working on Spanish, not making too much headway. I've worked so hard on German, my brain thinks that is the only other language there is.

When anyone speaks to me in French of Spanish, I always seem to answer in German. But students of today should face down this challenge and master more than one language.

Easing into international activity gives lots of possibilities. Think of pen pals. That's not just a childhood activity. After I returned from an adult education tour to the USSR, I felt I wanted to get some kind of personal contact. Through the Sister City Program in Portland, Maine, I located a most interesting female professor in a teacher's college. She appreciates the contact as well as I do. While she doesn't believe she will ever have the money to come to the United States, she keeps inviting me there. It would be a simple matter to get a contact through your ACHE, or any of the other adult education organizations.

There are many volunteer organizations one can work through without making a lifetime commitment. Let me mention again the Sister City Programs. It is possible to connect with a whole variety of different interests in these programs. Take the World Affairs Councils that exist in many cities. Years ago, I used to lead a one-day bus tour of one hundred persons to the United Nations for the Boston World Affairs Council. I don't know how far reaching the Society for International Development has spread throughout the country, but in Washington, D.C. I found it a great place to be informed and meet people with like interests. Then there are the United Nations Associations. Most cities have them. Church groups are more and more getting involved in international work and especially women's group in church or other, and these are no longer just missionary work. Some are

really involved in adult education. A little caveat here, one has to choose a volunteer project carefully. No one has professional or personal time to throw away, so we have to be deliberate in choosing and deciding just how much time we will spend on a given project.

One of the very most pleasant ways to get involved internationally, is to welcome foreign guests into the home. Through all the organizations mentioned above and many more you can make your interests known. In this way you are providing a service for the guests and for yourself.

Above I stated that many persons from other countries are attending the AAACE conferences, and it is certainly true that Americans are swelling the ranks of conferences in other countries. Probably you have all done it, and those of you who are administrators are no doubt aiding your instructors in whatever way you can to attend also.

Americans in general really don't know much about what goes on at the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, or what NGO's are or how they work. However, adult educators need to know. They need to know how much of what is being done and for what reason. They need to know so that they can speak out on issues, and serve as a corrective influence for enlightenment. (Read my new book).

When one gets really serious about international involvement, that is the time to look to the Fulbright possibility which is much more accessible than we are apt to think. Just a little hint on that score. Before you apply, get

yourself a firm invitation to an institution which you would like to visit. This shows you know what you are doing, but beyond that if the Fulbright doesn't happen to come through, you may just find that you can organize that visit in another way once you have gone that far.

Exchange programs are not difficult to arrange. It just takes a little doing. My daughter at Bunker Hill Community College in Boston exchanged with a faculty member from Nelson Colne College in Yorkshire. They exchanged jobs, houses and automobiles for the year through the help of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

Sabbaticals offer an opportunity. There again, the Sabbatical Committee will be much impressed if you have a definite invitation and a well developed project.

For persons close to retirement, one should think of the Peace Corps. They appreciate the experience that older persons bring to the work. Also the United Nations has a volunteer program for experts in many fields.

Consulting is another possibility. Actually, adult education professors were doing this before they ever realized that they should be training graduate students in their footsteps. Some still do not realize that. The USAID, the World Bank, any number of UN organizations, church NGO's, and all kinds of private NGO's need adult educators for short or longer assignments. They may not use the words "adult educators", but the mission is the same. One just has to familiarize oneself with a number of such organizations to see what the work is. The Academy of Educational Development in Washington, D.C. keeps a file

of professionals, so that they can call on them when they are writing a new grant. You can register with the AED or with other consulting agencies. You could get a list of agencies which do consulting for USAID, for instance.

We must not overlook the USIA where various possibilities exist from time to time. I heard about the college professors exchange program at a meeting of the Graduate Council of the United States. When I got back to Washington, I looked them up immediately and good things happened for our exchange program with Kenya. Write or fax the USIA for up-to-date information.

When students ask me what international adult education work is, I tell them it can be full-time or part-time, volunteer or paid, done in the United States or abroad, and on any aspect of adult education that may interest them. This sometimes leaves them baffled because they cannot see a direct path to a career. They are right, there is no direct path. Each person has the lovely privilege of shaping her or his own career. One has to be motivated, creative and informed, but that's the way adult educators are anyway.

In closing, I have one plea. I think you heard this from Dr. Sudarkasa yesterday as well. You must generously share your commitment to international adult education. Share it with your administration, your teachers, and your students, but especially within the communities in which you work.

For instance, when adult students are learning to read, why should their books not be about people learning to read and write

in other countries. If the books do not exist, some of you can write them. But even beyond such targeted possibilities, adult education covers a multitude of activities which community members would find interesting--income generating projects for women in Third World Countries, health, environment, peace and human rights, literacy. For as adult educators, we have the charge to educate the people, and not only in the classroom.

One last very crucial point. Be sure that every activity you undertake generates another. Such spin-offs are the surest way of becoming efficient and effective on a continuing basis.

News of the world today can be quite depressing. We hear that there are wars in at least seventeen countries, and peace-keeping forces of the UN in fourteen countries, and all kinds of barbarity in others. The adult education movement alone cannot fix the economic, social or political problems of this world, but these problems often have roots in the undereducation of adults, and they cannot be solved without adult education. The final caveat is this, international adult education is absolutely necessary. It is endlessly various, but one thing must always be forward in our minds--we all must be learners as well as teachers. We must understand each other's values, and promote respect for the dignity of persons and peoples.

I urge you to move to the forefront of this meaningful, and essential activity--world collaboration for a global perspective--to make Planet Earth a better place to live.